



Aphids are our #1 PEST so most of our IPM strategies focus on them.

Beginning approach to Banker Plants...

Note the banker plants on the right side of the aisle using hair nets

Aphidius kept getting through the hair nets and wiping out our cereal aphids



Our new approach to Banker Plants...

Produce them in the house, using a timer for the light and no hair nets



Removable front wall for watering, sowing, etc.



Cereal aphids on rye grass

Note the fly tape as gnats (?) were very prolific. Fly tape cured the problem



Our new greenhouse where

The electricity is from the sun  
The heat is from the earth and  
The emissions are at zero



With a 10 ton geothermal system and no burning of fuels, a night below zero nets a greenhouse temp in the 30's

The leaf crops and aphids didn't mind the cold but the beneficials did

A light and heat chamber was created to aid the banker plants' beneficials with marginal improvement



The lettuces grew all winter long

Note the poly draped over the bench in the rear right to force some of the floor heat up through the plants instead of losing it immediately to the ceiling

A heat curtain has since been installed



Herbs and lettuces grew well along with the aphids



Potato aphids dropped from the lettuces on 'compost day' and immediately found bench legs and started climbing



Our #1 strategy in controlling insects is concrete floors throughout and...



power washing each greenhouse each summer

Side note: January of 2016 we found only one weed (purslane) in one of the greenhouses and it had aphids on it just waiting for spring!



Ensete maurelii (red bananas) are popular with our garden center customers as well as the properties we plant out



They grow very well, especially during the hot months



They are also aphid magnets!!!

We place the ensetes where we will see them daily and have actually made a business decision to not grow any calibrachos in pots or baskets as we can't keep them clean of aphids

We only spot spray, like the ensete to the left, with Endeavor which is less damaging to the beneficials as it paralyzes the sucking mouthparts of aphids



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